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UNCLAS ADANA 000031

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 16, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for February 16, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

OZGUR GUNDEM / CUMHURIYET: According to a report prepared by Mesut Deger, Diyarbakir's CHP (Republican People's Party) MP and a member of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission, 30,000 people lost their lives as a result of terror-related incidents during various State of Emergency periods in the (southeastern) region between July 10, 1987 and December 30, 2002. The report states that of those 30,000, 23,000 were members of the (outlawed PKK terrorist) organization and 5000 were security officers.

CUMHURIYET: Former Van Security Director Zeki Catalkaya will reportedly replace Diyarbakir Security Director Orhan Okur, in order to solve the ongoing dispute between Okur and Diyarbakir Governor Efkani Ala about how EU harmonization laws should be implemented. It is highly likely that Okur will be appointed to the office of Canakkale Security Director.

BOLGE / ZAMAN / CUMHURIYET / HURRIYET / EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM / EKSPRES: During outlawed unauthorized demonstrations held on the sixth anniversary of Turkey's capture of Abdullah Ocalan, 50 people were taken into custody and 10 people (Zaman reports 30 people) were wounded in Diyarbakir. Turkish National Police used construction vehicles to demolish a barricade built by demonstrators in Mersin. One person reportedly died when guns were fired during the tumult in Mersin. The police filmed (allegedly for the purpose of gathering intelligence) tradesmen in Siirt who closed their businesses as an expression of their protest. Police and small groups of protesters engaged in scuffles in the streets of Batman, Mardin and Hakkari.

ZAMAN / OZGUR GUNDEM / EKSPRES: People excavating sand in a quarry in Tarsus township of Mersin found the lower jawbone of a dinosaur that is estimated to be 150 or 200 million-years-old. The fossil was handed over to the Tarsus Museum Directorate. A paleontologist from the Natural History Museum in Ankara, however, stated that the bone could not belong to a dinosaur, but rather to an elephant, which is only 10 or 15 million years old.

SABAH (GUNEY): Sabah Guney reports that Kizilay (Turkish Red Crescent) supplies would be gravely inadequate in the event of a disaster, such as an earthquake. Although Adana was selected by the organization as its Disaster Handling and Logistics Center of the Mediterranean Region, there are only 600 tents, which can provide shelter to only 2400 people, and no blood is currently available in the blood supplies of the organization, according to Sabah Guney.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Rauf Denktas paid a visit to Cag University in Mersin. During his meeting with students, Denktas warned them about the danger of underhanded schemes being devised to remove Turkey's presence in Cyprus.

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